nature and origin of tumors. This conception is not the product of a sudden inspiration, but is an hypothesis carefully and logically worked out after years of careful thought and study. A partial exposition of the studies now presented *in extenso* was incorporated in a work previously published by the author, entitled *Dissolution and Evolution and the Science of Medicine.* The few who are familiar with the former work and who appreciate the value and importance of its generalizations will receive the present book with the greatest pleasure.

The author presents in this book, in separate chapters, "An Outline of a New Hypothesis of the Origin and Nature of Tumors;" "The Facts of Morphology;" "The General and Special Conditions of Tumor Disease;" "The Secondary Phenomena;" "The Evidence from Treatment and Heredity;" and finally "The Practical Deductions as to Prevention and Treatment." The condition of our knowledge of tumor disease in all its aspects (nature, causation and treatment) could scarcely be more unsatisfactory than it is, and scientific research in this direction is much to be desired.

It is useless, in a short review, to attempt to convey any conception of the nature of the hypothesis presented or the grounds upon which it is based; this can only be gained from a careful study of the author's presentation. It may be said, however, that it is quite worthy of careful study. The entire work is thoroughly scientific in character, and whether the conclusions of the writer are accepted or not, it cannot fail to be of the greatest interest to all who feel the need of new and broader generalizations in medicine and who appreciate any attempts to give coherence to the essentials of general and special pathological anatomy.

One criticism may be made as to the manner of expression, namely, that it partakes too much of the form affected by philosophic writers to be readily or easily grasped by the average physician. H. M. B.

THE TREATMENT OF SYPHILIS OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM. By JULIUS ALTHAUS, M.D., M.R.C.P. (Lond.), Senior Physician to the Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1890.

ALTHAUS recommends that the treatment of nerve-syphilis should be first prophylactic, and second, curative. The prophylactic treatment should be pursued on two different lines. The first and most important of these is the destruction of the virus at the onset of the disease, both by excision of the primary sore whenever practicable, and by the *efficient* administration of mercury in the earlier stages before the disease encroaches upon important organs. He holds, with Henry Lee, Fournier, and others, that mercury efficiently administered in the earlier stages of syphilis acts as a true germicide, leaving the patient's constitution as uninjured as if the disease had never been contracted. On this point he quotes Mr. Lee, who states that: "If by being cured is meant that patients after proper treatment remain in future free from symptoms, do not infect their wives, have healthy families, and live as long as others, then I firmly maintain that syphilis is as curable as any other disease." This quotation, which expresses the view generally held by syphilographers, is evidently taken from Lee's protest to the view of Gowers, advanced in the latter's most interesting Lettsomian Lectures (January, 1889) on *Syphilis and the Nervous System*, that syphilis is incurable in the sense that the essential element of the disease, the virus that lies behind all the symptoms and consequences, may be totally destroyed by any treatment so that it can never again disturb the system.

The second point in the prophylactic treatment of nerve-syphilis is to sustain the nervous system of those who have had syphilis, and especially of those in whom the earliest phases of the disease escaped treatment. This Althaus does by advising, after a proper mercurial course, a prolonged holiday spent in the open air, especially at sea, and with it careful living in every particular. The curative treatment of nerve-syphilis resolves itself into the treatment of the specific lesion itself (gumma or endarteritis), and of its secondary consequences resulting from pressure or from removal of blood supply. Althaus regards mercury as a true specific in all primary nerve lesions, and believes that it cannot be replaced by any other drug, excepting, of course, potassium iodide when it is necessary to rapidly combat dangerous symptoms. The reviewer holds a similar opinion. To his mind the superiority of mercury over potassium iodide in the treatment of nerve-syphilis is due to the fact that the majority of cases of nerve-syphilis have not been subjected to a proper mercurial course before the nervous system becomes involved.

Althaus does not favor the intermittent plan of treatment. He is not in agreement with those who believe that mercury is apt to lose its effect after having been continued for a certain length of time. Experience, indeed, has taught him the reverse, that its effects are likely to be more decided rather than less when the system is kept constantly, though slightly, under its influence for many months. He prefers the hypodermic injection of a non-irritant, insoluble preparation of mercury to all other methods of introducing the metal, and the results obtained with it justify his preference. His preparation consists of metallic mercury, thoroughly triturated with lanolin and afterward well mixed with carbolized oil. This, prepared as he directs, forms a somewhat fluid, gray cream, in which all the metallic globules are extinguished. Five minims should equal half a grain of metallic mercury. He rarely finds it necessary to exceed this quantity, which he injects once weekly into the glutei muscles. He states that its injection is painless, and causes neither nodules nor abscess. We are surprised to encounter the astonishing statement that when the effects of mercury so used appear tardily, Althaus prefers giving sodium or potassium iodide coincidently, *to retain the mercury longer in the system*, rather than injecting larger doses of mercury. The effect of the iodide would be to form a soluble salt of its base and mercury, which, while producing a more prompt action, would of course be far more easily eliminated. On another page a similar statement appears, that a portion of the benefit resulting from a concurrent administration of potassium iodide is due to the iodide impeding the elimination of mercury!

Althaus regards galvanism as the most useful agent in the treatment of the secondary, ordinary lesions. It seems to improve the circulation in the affected vessels and promotes nutrition in the damaged area.

The reviewer has thus given an outline of this most excellent pamphlet; the paper itself is worth a careful reading. D. D. S.

DISEASES OF THE EYE. By EDWARD NETTLESHIP, F.R.C.S., Ophthalmic Surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital; Surgeon to the Royal London Opthalmic Hospital (Moorfields), etc. Fourth American, from the fifth English edition. With a chapter on Examination for Color Perception. By WILLIAM THOMSON, M.D., Professor of Ophthalmology in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1890.

THE popularity that Nettleship's work has achieved fully supports the good things that the reviewers have said of former editions, and leaves but few who require to be introduced to its merits. The changes from the matter of the last edition are comparatively slight, as might be expected from the slight advance that ophthalmic science has made in the brief period that has elapsed since the appearance of that edition. There have been some new cuts substituted for old ones, and a most notable improvement in the colored plate given to show the colors of the test and confusion skeins of Holmgren's test for color-blindness. Some change of attitude is apparent toward iridectomy in cataract extraction, but the after-treatment is still made to include the "partly-dark" room and the bandage.

The appendix giving formulæ, descriptions of instruments, etc., continues to be a valuable portion of the work. But, probably through an oversight of the publishers, it is rather overloaded with the name of a firm of opticians; and one, too, that has incurred the just disfavor of the medical profession. To refer to this firm as one from which Snellen test-types, and other such articles in universal use, may be obtained, and to repeat their name and full business address three times in a dozen consecutive lines, is certainly unnecessary for instruction of the reader.

E. J.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF EPHRAIM MCDOWELL, M.D., "THE FATHER OF OVARIOTOMY." By his Granddaughter, MARY YOUNG RIDENBAUGH. Pp. xvi., 558. New York: Charles L. Webster & Co., 1890.

THE American reader will open this volume with no little interest, since it promises to give him a deeper insight into the life of one who stamped the impress of his genius upon medicine for all time. McDowell is one of the heroic figures in which the history of our profession abounds, and the authoress has placed us under no common obligation in writing his biography.

Every work of this character contains more or less irrelevant matter which could be omitted with advantage. The first hundred pages really include all the biographical portion, and will be of special interest to the profession, who are already sufficiently familiar with the history of ovariotomy and the opinions of eminent specialists, living and dead. Mrs. Ridenbaugh has executed her own part of the work very creditably, since she has given us a graphic picture of the private life of the great surgeon, the motives which governed him, and the almost superhuman courage which led him to attempt seeming impossibilities. Chapter V., containing an account of the historic first case of ovariotomy, is some-